National Emergency Alert System Test: Information for the Rio Grande Valley

Date & Time: November 9, 2011, at **1:00PM CST**.

Purpose: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will test the legacy Emergency Alert System (EAS), not the newer Common Alerting Protocol capability (CAP). [CAP will be tested in the future.]

Update: Length of Test: Between 30 seconds and 1 minute. The new revised handbook from the FCC and FEMA can be found at http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeastest .

Effect on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR): The test will *__not__* be carried or broadcast on NWR. NWS and FEMA are working on improvements that include NWS receiving the national audio message and broadcasting it over the NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) network. During the national EAS test, NWS will demonstrate the interfaces for receiving and capturing Emergency Action Notification (EAN) live-code and audio messages. NWR Improvement Project (WRIP) Phase II will be installed in the NWS Telecommunications Operations Center and at NWS offices nationwide through 2012. After those improvements are complete, NWS will install updates which include capability to broadcast the EAN live code and audio from FEMA over all NWR stations.

Effect on RMTs and RWTs: The National EAS Test will take the place of the Required Monthly Test (RMT) – no RMT will be conducted in November by the National Weather Service (NWS) offices that service Wisconsin. The **Required Weekly Test (RWT)**, normally conducted by Texas NWS offices each Wednesday between 11 AM and Noon, will be **moved up to Tuesday, Nov. 8th, between 11 AM and Noon CST.**

What EAS Originator Code Is Used?: It will be Primary Entry Point (PEP).

What EAS Location Code is Used?: EAS Location Code will be Washington, DC. [Equipment manufacturers have said this will not be an issue, and no EAS unit re-programming is necessary.

What EAS Product Codes are Used?: The test will consist of the Emergency Action Notification (EAN) code followed by the audio message and finishing with the End of message (EOM) code. Emergency Action Termination (EAT) code will not be used.

Whose Voice Will be in the Test?: The test *__will not__* use the President's voice.

How will the Test be Disseminated?: The test will be disseminated nationwide through an NPR (National Public Radio) satellite channel, as well as over a network of specially-designated Primary Entry Point (PEP) stations in Texas. The Texas PEP stations will broadcast the alert to 25 Local Primary I and 25 Local Primary II stations, and in some areas to Local Primary Spanish stations. Texas State Network will relay the test to its 130 radio station affiliates via satellite. For the Rio Grande Valley, the Primary I station is KFRQ-94.5 FM.

For the Hearing Impaired

To help ensure the highest possible inclusion for all citizens during the national EAS test, Deaf Link has responded to the request for the EAS Public Service Announcement (PSA) to be accessible to citizens who rely on American Sign Language (ASL). The links below can be shared by email or other means of dissemination. On request, and at no charge, these same accessible EAS PSAs are also available in "broadcast quality" formats for use on websites or by Broadcasters. The Texas Association of Broadcasters (TAB) has already shared the Broadcast quality formats with the National Association of Broadcasters. If you need the Broadcast quality files please contact DeafLink.

English voice and text/ASL http://deaflink.com/video/eas/l_eng.html

Spanish voice and text/ASL http://deaflink.com/video/eas/l_span.html

Video Describing the Test (with ASL): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xG82KIksl9g

The Deaf Link team appreciates your help with supporting inclusion in emergency preparedness for all citizens.

Other Useful Links:

Press Release on National EAS Test & Toolkit
http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=55722
http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/ipaws/national_eas_test_info_toolkit_081511.pdf

FCC November 3rd Public Notice Update:
http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2011/db1103/DA-11-1857A1.pdf

FCC FAQ on National EAS Test:
http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/emergency-alert-system-nationwide-test

FEMA Webinars and site to provide your input to FEMA on EAS:
https://nationaldialogue-emergencyalertsystem.ideascale.com/

Credits: FEMA IPAWS, NWS OS51 Dissemination Services, SBE Chapter 24, Inc. web site:
http://www.sbe24.org/